AN: Time for the second story of the series! Thing are already getting tense, aren't they? What could possibly happen next? Anything, of course!

Poison

Gamble

Timon leaned back against a tree, calmly smoking a joint as he stared out at the desert landscape. This was usually where he and Pumbaa – when the latter was still alive, of course – collected their weekly supply of Sumu from Death to sell to their customers. It was a quiet and quaint area, free from distractions. No cops were going to poke their noses into such a distant part of the land. It was safe.

There was no drop-off to be made tonight, though. The meerkat was simply banking on the fact that Death might turn up to speak to him. After all, he *did* say that he wanted information concerning whoever had murdered Pumbaa in cold blood.

Regardless of whoever had done the deed, it could only mean bad news. Rival gangs were rife ever since the Sumu drug had started being traded. Get enough people hooked on it and you could theoretically rule the entire city. Anyone and everyone was interested in taking a piece of the action. Death may have been in charge of the biggest operation, but that wasn't to say that he couldn't come under fire from opposition. Quite the opposite, in fact.

Timon finished his joint and allowed it to fall from his limp paw. He sighed, wondering if Death would show up after all. *Maybe he wants me to go to him,* he mused, somewhat delirious in his intoxicated state. *Crawl across the desert... like a scorpion.*

He giggled at this, quite high from the drugs. "You loser," he chuckled. "You won't ever show up."

"Timon."

"*Jesus Christ!*"

Timon fell onto his back, startled immensely by the sudden appearance of Death from right behind him. The leader of the enormous drug empire didn't look too pleased to see him in this state at all.

"H-h-hi, sir," Timon stammered, heart thumping in his chest as he slowly clambered to his feet. "I – I was j-just looking for you."

"You are high." Death's horrific gaze was enough to make the meerkat feel like he had been set alight. To say that his employer was terrifying was an understatement. He didn't think there were enough adjectives in the world to describe how frightening he was...

"It was just a quick blunt," Timon said. "To keep the edge off. Pumbaa's death has been pretty rough on me."

"You smoke it in your own time," Death told him firmly. "When you are on the job, you are on the job. Getting high when we are trying to discuss business is not only impractical, but severely irritating."

"I'm sorry," Timon said, feeling very awkward. "It won't happen again."

"I trust that you found out who the murderer was?" Death asked, raising an eyebrow at the addict.

"Sort of," Timon mumbled, staring down at his feet.

"*Sort of?*" The meerkat could picture Death's eyes piercing right through him. "What is *that* supposed to mean?"

"Look, I know it doesn't sound like much," Timon begun to explain, "but the cops are on to you."

"I seriously doubt that," Death said. "This operation is kept quite under wraps."

"Yeah, well, not now," Timon retorted. "I caught some cop with one of my customers. They were working together."

"Is that so?" Death asked, his interest piqued. Timon noticed that the drug lord looked somewhat alarmed. That was a first. "Tell me, Timon… what was his name?"

"Huh?" Timon stared into his blood red eyes.

"What. Was. His. Name?" Death was speaking to him as if he had the intelligence of a rock. That actually wasn't too far from the truth.

"Well, I, uh…" Timon shuffled on his feet, knowing that he didn't have the answer to Death's question.

"*Tell me*," Death urged, gritting his teeth. His patience with the druggie was clearly wearing thin.

"I… didn't catch it," Timon admitted. "I was hiding at the time. I just heard 'em talking. The cop was gonna go check out the lab and the pussy was gonna go to the party."

"And you didn't catch his name?" It sounded as though Death already knew the answer to that.

"No," Timon said, his shoulders sagging. "Sorry."

"Hmm…" Death nodded. "Okay. Thank you, Timon. You have been a very useful help to me."

"Thank you, sir," Timon said, a smile forming on his little face.

"And now I think that it is time your employment was terminated."

"Huh?"

Timon barely had time to even react as his throat was slashed wide open by Death's jagged claws.

Blood spurted from the wound like a demented waterfall, spilling over onto the ground. The meerkat collapsed onto his face, gagging and gasping as he died a slow and painful death.

Death's expression remained motionless as he calmly returned his paw to the ground. He casually surveyed the bloody corpse of Timon, barely showing any signs of disappointment.

The lion quietly picked up Timon's dead form, slinging it over his back and walking away with it into the desert sands.

The body would have to be dealt with.

It seemed that the deaths of Timon and Pumbaa had no underlying effect on the raging parties that plagued a particular clearing in the jungle every night. Most of the animals still had quite a fair quantity of drink and drugs left over from their own personal stores. The vast majority had found its way into the festivities.

"God, that's hot." Moto was drooling from the mouth as he sat at the base of a tall tree, smoking a joint and watching something going on in the middle of the clearing. "Next time there's a Mixer going on, I want in. Care to join me, Sarafina?"

Sarafina was sitting right beside Moto. Rather than watching the mass congregation of sexual excitement taking place in front of her, she seemed far more interested in staring down at the ground.

He almost did it. Sarafina was lost in her own thoughts. *He almost raped you. A goddamn meerkat. God, that's embarrassing...*

"Sarafina?"

Moto finally snapped the lioness out of her trance. "What?" she mumbled, turning to look at him.

"I asked you if you'd like to join me for the next Mixer?" Moto repeated, raising his eyebrows at her in a rather flirtatious manner. His gaze flickered over to the middle of the clearing. "Jesus – that zebra's really going at it!"

"I don't think so, Moto," Sarafina answered. "I've kinda gone off Mixers for a while."

"Gone off?" Moto laughed. "Jeez, you used to be the first one there. I remember that time with the two elephants… Hot stuff."

"Yeah – you certainly enjoyed that one from a safe distance, didn't you?" Sarafina shot back. "Right from behind a bush…"

"That's all right," Moto said, snuggling up to the lioness. "We can do it in private, if that's what you want."

"I don't want to do anyone," Sarafina said, shuffling uncomfortably on the spot. After almost being sexually assaulted by a meerkat, the last thing she had on her mind was making love to a hormone-driven cub. "Just leave it, Moto."

"Okay, okay," Moto said. "Wow – what's up with you tonight? You're never usually like this."

"I'm not in the mood," Sarafina said simply, turning her head away from the cub.

"You? Not in the mood for a party?" Moto chuckled. "That's gotta be a joke, right?"

"Well, I'm not," Sarafina confirmed, looking somewhat miserable. "Is that okay?"

"Not really," said Moto. "I think you need to lighten up. Here – why don't you take a puff or two?" He offered his joint to her.

Sarafina stared at the joint for a moment, temptation stirring up inside of her. She felt the urge to grab that thing and smoke it for all it was worth. However, deep down, something told her that it was… wrong.

What's wrong with you? she asked herself. Sarafina? Not smoke a joint or two? That was the type of thing that only happened in fairy tales. *It's only a joint. Smoke it up, girl. It's the only thing that's gonna chill you out.*

The lioness waved a paw in the air. "I don't think so, Moto," she said. "I'm kinda trying to cut down on the weed."

"Fine," Moto said, popping the joint back into his own mouth. "I don't know what the big deal is, though."

"Well… it is kinda bad for you," Sarafina said, embarrassed to be finally speaking the truth for once.

Moto shrugged. "Who cares? You're gonna die anyway," he said, as if it were nothing. "All I care about is having as much fun as possible. I get more than enough of that here. It's paradise. What more could you want?"

Something better, Sarafina replied silently.

"I don't know," she said. "I'm just trying to cut down on it, that's all. Didn't say I was giving it up completely."

"You're entitled to a break," Moto said. "We all need something to help us unwind. What else are you gonna do? Go to rehab?"

"No." Sarafina shook her head. "I ain't doing anything like that."

"Then just take a puff," Moto said, offering up the joint once more. "One little hit won't hurt."

"You know what?" Sarafina snatched the joint from him, sticking it into her mouth. "Fine. You little rat."

Moto laughed. "That's more like it," he said. "So… what happened with you and Timon?"

The joint almost dropped out of Sarafina's mouth upon hearing that. "What?"

"You heard me," Moto said. "Timon coming in waving a gun around and spoiling our fun. What the hell was all that about?"

Sarafina took a puff from her joint, trying to block out the painful memories of the afternoon. He kept on seeing the meerkat fondling her body, poised to violate her in the most horrific way imaginable…

"It was… it was nothing," Sarafina lied, visibly shaking. The claws on her hind paws tensed up, not unlike a human being clenching their toes in nervousness. "Just a… a debt kinda thing, ya know?"

"Didn't sound like it," Moto said. "And now the word on the street is that Pumbaa's dead. We barely saw Timon here tonight. I can't even get my Sumu fix."

Sarafina closed her eyes tightly, still seeing Timon hunched over her body.

He raped you…

He raped you…

He raped your mind.

"Moto!" Sarafina was suddenly up in the cub's face, staring deep into his eyes. "Do you still have a… secret stash?"

"What?" It took Moto a moment to register. "Oh… well, yeah. I do. Why?"

"You gotta let me have some," Sarafina said. A severe craving for Sumu had suddenly attacked her. She needed her fix. "*Now*."

"I've only got a bit of liquid left," Moto said. "Just enough for one high. Besides, I thought you said you were trying to quit?"

"Screw that," Sarafina snapped. "Just give me it. Please. I'll pay you back."

"Sarafina, I can't," Moto said. "That's for emergencies. You know how tense the cravings can get sometimes. I'm sorry."

Sarafina thought for a moment. "Then… let's gamble for it," she suggested. "What do you say?"

"Gamble?" Moto narrowed his eyes, watching as Sarafina finished off the joint and discarded it on the ground. "What kind of gamble?"

"Well…" Sarafina fluttered her eyelashes seductively at the cub. "Let's gamble on whether I can do you in less than a minute."

Moto stared at her for a moment.

"Okay."

"Yes! Yes! Oh, God, yes!"

Sarafina grinned victoriously as she settled down by the riverbank. She stared down at a coconut halve she held in her forepaws. It was filled with a small amount of purple liquid. Her reward from Moto for winning the gamble.

You need to get high, she told herself. *You* need *to.*

The lioness glanced at a small shard of sharpened metal that lay on the ground beside her. A classic tool for those who wished to inject Sumu rather than snort it. The effect would be much greater, that was for certain.

She picked it up with one paw, dabbing it into the coconut halve. The liquid was somewhat sticky, so it easily attached itself to the end of the metal shard.

That's right... Sarafina thought, heart pounding with anticipation. *That's right...*

Sarafina gently directed the metal shard into her weakened skin. It instantly penetrated through the surface.

Within moments, the Sumu was already flowing through Sarafina's veins. Filling her up with pleasure.

Yes... Sarafina slowly fell onto her back, high once more on the drug. *Yes...*

To Be Continued…

AN: No! Sarafina! Why? It's obvious that the attempted rape is making her cravings worse. Such a shame. Once again, she succumbs to the Sumu drug. This can only mean trouble. Let's just hope that things don't get worse – although they probably will…

NEXT TIME: TPYMK investigates the lab, and makes a shocking discovery.